

Chelsea Public Library Historical Archives Guide

"A Guide to the Resources of the Chelsea Public Library Historical Archives"

NOVEMBER 2008

Ready Reference Topics

Introduction and Purpose

The City of Chelsea has a long and interesting history, from original settlement in 1624 to major fires in 1908 and 1973, and most recently the state-imposed receivership in 1991.

In 1970, the Historical Archives in the library were instituted as a depository for any resources relating to Chelsea history. Since that time, hundreds of students, scholars, teachers, historians, city officials and city residents have made use of the Archives.

This guide was provided as an aid to individuals doing research in the Archives.

Archives Ready Reference

Over a period of time, the library staff has compiled a list of the most commonly researched topics in the Historical Archives. Information on each topic has been reproduced and placed in individual loose-leaf binders. Such information is in the form of clippings from local and national newspapers, magazine and journal articles, photographs, government publications, and original research. New material is added on a continuing basis. These binders, representing over fifty topics, are kept at the adult circulation desk for easy access to staff and patrons.

Archives Hours:

Monday - Friday 10:00am to 5:00pm

Ready Reference Topics:

- An Abridged History of Chelsea
- Articles about Chelsea (1970-1971; 1980-89; 1990-92; 1993-1994; 1995; 1996; 1997-1998; 1999-2002; 2003-Present)
- Battle of Chelsea Creek, (Vol. 1,2,3)
- Blizzard of 1978
- Burning of Chelsea by Pratt

- Burning of Chelsea 1973
- Chelsea :All American City 1998
- Chelsea Fire 1908
- Chelsea Fire 1973
- Chelsea Health Needs Assessment
- Chelsea Naval Hospital
- Chelsea Receivership Documents
- Chelsea's Role in World War II
- City of Chelsea by Gillespie
- Community Profile 1993
- Corruption Probe
- Daughters and Sons of Chelsea – Group information on second and third generation

Chelsea people

- Demographics & Statistical Profile of Chelsea
- Drugs in Chelsea
- Grueby Poetry
- Hidden Massachusetts/ The Boston Globe 1997-Statistical information on Chelsea
- Hispanics in Chelsea
- History of Chelsea by Chamberlain
- Intimate City by Kopf
- John Ruiz, Heavyweight Boxer
- Lewis Latimer, Scientist
- Low Art Tiles
- Mystic River (Tobin) Bridge
- New Immigrants to Chelsea 1970 – 1996
- Plan for Hispanics in Chelsea
- Receivership
- Representative Richard A. Voke (*House Majority Leader*)
- Senator Thomas F. Birmingham (*Senate President*)
- Seven Generations by Pratt
- Shipbuilding in Chelsea
- Shaping Education for the Twenty – First Century
- Soldier's Home History (*Vol. 1, 2*)
- Some History of Chelsea Creek by the Chelsea Historic Society
- Spice Mill on the Marsh
- State Register of Historic Places 2000
- Survey of Industrial Sites

LOCATION: Adult Circulation Desk

Historical Archives Materials Usage Policy

The Archives are closed to the public during evening hours.

Location of the Historical Archives

The Chelsea Historical Archives is located in the lower level of the library next to the Children's Department. Patrons may enter the lower level from the Marlboro Street entrance. This entrance has a ramp and is handicapped-accessible.

Patrons may also enter by using the library main entrance on Broadway and take the elevator or stairway down to the archives.

Admittance

To gain entrance to the archives patrons must provide valid identification and register in the visitor's log. There will be a librarian or volunteer at the children's circulation desk or in the technical services area to assist patrons with sign-in and admittance.

Access to Materials

Patrons will be limited to examination of one piece of material at a time.

Removal of materials from the Archives to another part of the library for photocopying, etc. will be done only under the supervision of a librarian.

The library reserves the right to limit the amount of personal belongings that a user may take into the archives, such as briefcases, backpacks, long coats, etc.

Once the patron has located the material he or she will be using, under the supervision of a librarian, he/she will note a description of that material in the sign-in book, and is then permitted to go another part of the library to perform research.

When the patron is done using the material, he/she will return it to a librarian, who will note its return in the sign-in book.

Circulation of Materials

No materials from the archives are permitted to leave the building. There are no exceptions to this rule.

Photocopying

Photocopy machines are located next to the Archives and in the adult department in the rotunda. Patrons must consult with a librarian to remove materials from the archives for photocopying.

It is the responsibility of the patron to insure that copyright laws are observed.

Research

The library, with the assistance of volunteer, is able to perform genealogical research and answer questions relating to Chelsea history on a limited basis.

Questions should be sent by mail to:

Library Director

Chelsea Public Library

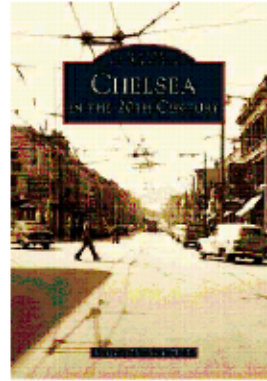
569 Broadway

Chelsea, MA 02150

The fee schedule for extended archives research is as follows:

- The first hour of research time is free
- The next two hours are \$10.00 per hour up to a maximum of two hours.

No food or drink of any kind is permitted in the archives. Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the building.



Books on History of Chelsea

Books are arranged in alphabetical order by author, and are followed by a brief description of their content.

1. **Antin, Mary.** *"The Promised Land."* (Houghton-Mifflin:1969).
Jewish family immigrates from Russia and settles in the Boston and Chelsea area – a true story.
2. **Ayer, Eleanor H.** *"Lewis Latimer."* (Raintree Streck-Vaughn Pub.:1997).
3. **Norman, Winfred L.** *"Lewis Latimer."* (Patterson, Lily:1994).
Two biographies of Chelsea-born black inventor and draftsman Lewis Howard Latimer, who worked as an assistant to Thomas Edison and made major contributions to the development of incandescent lighting.
4. **Baldwin, Thomas.** *"Vital Records of Chelsea, Massachusetts to the year 1850."* (Boston: Wright & Potter Printing Co., 1976).
Births, deaths, and marriages.
5. **Beltan, Ximena, et.al.** *"A view from under the bridge: A plan for Hispanic Chelsea"* (Chelsea: Care about now, Inc., 1976).
An analysis of the growing Hispanic population.
6. **Briggs, Prissilla Pratt.** *"Pratt's descendants with narratives".*
7. **Brown, Gerard.** *"Postcard History Series: Chelsea."*

8. **Chamberlain, Mellen.** "*A Documentary History of Chelsea*" Vol.1 & 2. (Cambridge: University Press, 1908).

A very detailed history of Chelsea, including the Boston Precincts of Winnisimmet, Rumney Marsh, and Pullen Point from 1624-1824.

9. **Civil War History.** (Kent State University Press, 1997).

10. **Clarke, Margaret Harriman.** "*Chelsea: Images of America.*" (Charlestown, SC: Arcadia Pub., 1998).

The first published history of the city since 1930, illustrated and covering the period from early settlement to the early part of the twentieth century.

11. **Clarke, Margaret Harriman.** "*Chelsea in the 20th Century.*" (Charlestown, SC: Arcadia Pub., 2004).

12. **DuMont, Matthew, M.D.** "*Treating the Poor.*" (Belmont, MA: Dymphna Press, 1992).
A physician's view of the mental health of Chelsea.

13. **Faulkner, Thomas.** "*Chelsea and its environs.*" Vol. 1&2. (Boston: Nichols & Son, 1829).
An historical topographical history of Chelsea.

14. **Fay, Frank B.** "*War Papers of Frank B. Fay.*" (Boston: George H. Ellis Co., 1911).
Reminiscences of Chelseans in the Army of the Potomac, 1861-1865.

15. **Gillespie, Charles.** "*The City of Chelsea.*" (Chelsea Chelsea Gazette, 1898).
Historical and pictorial description of Chelsea from 1624.

16. **Hoar, Jay.** "*New England's last Civil War Veterans.*" (Arlington, Texas: Seaciff Press, 1976).

17. **Kopf, Edward.** "*The Intimate City.*" (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1974).
A study of the social order of Chelsea from 1906-1915.

18. **McKay, Robert.** "*The Battle of Chelsea Creek.*" (Chelsea: Chelsea Evening Record, 1928).
A description of the second armed conflict (*and first naval battle*) of the American Revolution.

19. **Nason, George.** "*Minute Men of '61.*" (Boston: Smith & McCance, 1910).
History and complete roster of the Massachusetts regiments during the Civil War.

20. **Pratt, Walter.** "*The Burning of Chelsea.*" (Boston: Sampson Publishing Co., 1908).
Description of the Great Chelsea Fire of 1908).

21. **Pratt, Walter.** "*Seven Generations: A Story of Prattville and Chelsea.*" (Chelsea: privately printed, 1930).
The best book describing Chelsea's history – covers the period from the first settlers in the early 1600's to 1910.

22. **Shiefman, Vicky.** "*Good-bye to the Trees.*" NY: Macmillan, 1993.

Fiction based on fact: a Russian family moving to Chelsea.

21. **Sullivan, Kathleen.** *"Chelsea: Dying Community?"* (Boston: privately printed, 1972).
An overview of the politics, history, and problems facing the city in the early 1970's.

24. **Trash, John.** *" The United States Marine Hospital."* (1940).

LOCATION: Archives.

Annual Reports of Chelsea City Goverment 1848 - 1933, 1998

Reports of each individual city department combined into one volume annually

LOCATION: Archives

Atlases (including Revere and Winthrop) 1874 1886 1896 1911 1914

Large bound volumes showing detailed streets maps, ownership of property, square footage of lots, and configuration of buildings on lots.

LOCATION: Archives

City Directories

- 1847 - 1995 original copies

LOCATION: Archives

- 1847 - 1933 microfilm

LOCATION : Adult References Room

Provides the name, address, and occupation of adults over age 18 in the city

City Maps

- Street 1943, 1960, 1965, 1970, 1972, 1973, 1986
- Road atlas 1954, 1987

LOCATION: Archives

Minutes of the Board of Aldermen 1976 - 1991

LOCATION: Archives

Minutes of the school committee 1968 - 1991, 1997

LOCATION: Archives

Monographs 1954, 1965, 1970, 1972, 1973, 1980, 1983, 1984, 1990-1997

Provided by the Massachusetts Department of commerce, these provide data and statistics about the city's residents. We own the years listed above.

LOCATION: Archives

Municipal Budgets 1973 - 1998

Adopted operating budgets of city departments for the years listed above.

LOCATION: Current year: Adult Circulation Desk

Past years: Archives

Newspapers

Chelsea Gazette

- April 1886 - August 1941 (Microfilm)

Chelsea Record

- 1925 - 1997 (microfilm)
- 1939 - 1968 (bound volumes)
- 1996 - presents (original copies)

Chelsea Telegraph & pioneer

- January 1855 - December 1906 (microfilm)

Chelsea Weekly News

- June 1976 - April 1990 (microfilm)

LOCATION: Microfilm: Adult Reference Room / Bound volumes: Archives / Original copies: Adult Circulation Desk

Ordinances, City of Chelsea 1739 -1883, 1902, 1909, 1928, 1929, 1952, 1974,1995

LOCATION: Archives

Telephone Directories

North Suburban Boston from 1978 to the present.

LOCATION: Archives

Videocassettes

- *Conflagration: the 1973 Fire* -- Produced by the Defence Civil Preparedness Agency.
- *Chelsea in Receivership* -- Broadcast on *60 Minutes*, May 1, 1994.
- *Chelsea Leaves Receivership* -- Broadcast on *Chronicle*, March 6, 1995.
- *Drugs in Chelsea* -- Televised in three parts on WCVB-TV, Boston, April 25 - 27, 1988.
- *The Great Chelsea Fire, 1973* -- Produced by the National Fire Protection Association.
- *Chelsea On The Waterfront* -- April 1998.
- *Chelsea Creek: Currents of Change* -- August 1998.
- *Chelsea The All American City* -- 1998.
- *A Chelsea River* -- *Vigilant Vision Media*, 54 Minutes
- *Chelsea Fire "In Three Parts"* -- February 2001, *Conflagration!*

LOCATION: Administrative office

Important Dates in Chelsea History

- ✿ 1621 – Visited by Myles Standish and Plymouth men
- ✿ 1624 – Settled by Samuel Maverick
- ✿ 1631 – Chelsea ferry established, oldest in the colonies
- ✿ 1632 – Winnisimmet, Rumney Marsh, and Pullen Point declared part of Boston.
- ✿ 1739 – Winnisimmet, Rumney Marsh, and Pullen Point become part of Chelsea
- ✿ 1775 – Battle of Chelsea Creek fought, the second battle of the American Revolution
- ✿ 1775-76 – General George Washington visited Chelsea on several occasions

- ✿ 1846 - Revere set off from Chelsea
- ✿ 1848 - Abraham Lincoln visits Chelsea
- ✿ 1857 - Chelsea a City
- ✿ 1908 - Great Chelsea Fire destroys one third of the city
- ✿ 1925 - Chelsea reaches its peak population 47, 247
- ✿ 1973 - Second Great Chelsea Fire destroys eighteen city blocks
- ✿ 1989 - Boston University assumes administration of the Chelsea School System
- ✿ 1991 - State Receivership suspends charter and assumes control of city government
- ✿ 1994 - Receivership ends and a city manager form of government begins
- ✿ 1996 - School year opens with seven new schools on four different sites
- ✿ 1998 - Chelsea awarded All-American City status by the National Civic League
- ✿ 2008 - Boston University/Chelsea School System partnership ends